

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A product distribution and payment system for limited use or otherwise restricted digital software products. Digital content data comprising a software product to be rented is made available to customers through a detachable local storage medium, such as a DVD or CD-ROM disc, or over a network connection. The product digital content is capable of being accessed and played back through a computer or game console at the customer site. The software product may comprise a limited use product that is restricted in the number of plays or duration of use. The customer is allowed to download and purchase the product using his computer or playback console. The product purchase information is encoded and transmitted to the content distributor. When the preset time or number of plays has elapsed the software program is frozen and access to the program is not allowed. In one embodiment of the present invention, a two-way, public key/private key encryption system is implemented to transmit the product and usage information between the server providing the software product and the customer computer system.